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# Lacrosse

Furman University

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# What about lacrosse?

It's been called the fastest sport on two feet, and for about a decade it has also been the fastest growing high school and intercollegiate sport in the nation. In 2012, buoyed by a \$1.5 million start-up gift from Trustee David Trone, '77, Furman announced it would add Division I men's and women's lacrosse to its roster of intercollegiate sports, expanding the University's recruiting footprint for student-athletes seeking opportunities to play on the national stage. The women's team will begin play in Spring 2015. The men's team, under the direction of 35-year Division I coaching veteran and current head coach of the U.S. Men's National Senior Team Richie Meade, began play in Spring 2014 with a roster dominated by freshmen. We sat down to talk to Coach Meade about why the job was meant for him.

### What was the deciding factor for Furman?

President Smolla made it clear how committed Furman was to athletics, and lacrosse specifically, and was willing to let me bring my leadership program to the team right away. Plus, the facilities are excellent, it's an intimate setting, and it doesn't hurt that it's in the '50s in January.

### You have a significant winning record.

#### What drives you to win?

Being a winning coach is relative to who's considering it. My only talent is determination. I really focus on my assistant coaches, developing them, and to insure that we've got the right approach to a problem.

### And what's that approach?

A very disciplined one. We have a leadership program that's based on five principles: competence, character, commitment, courage, and compassion. Everything we do has to fit in one of these categories. You can be technically tactical all day long, but it's the human part that makes you successful in the game.

### Why are these five principles so important on the field?

Because it's what comes into play the first time you get punched in the face. It's the training that kicks in so you can take it and keep playing. It's how we're preparing for this first season.



### How else are you preparing?

There will be many challenges this first season. We're attempting to do what very few teams have done, one year of recruiting and we're out there. Almost every recruit we've got was a personal recommendation, kids who wanted to come to Furman, and kids who know lacrosse. Athletes with a passion to practice. Because there's a ton of practice.

### Why so much focus on practice?

Any team practices about five times more than they play. If you only focus on the games, you lose momentum in the practices. If the game

is your focus you sacrifice the opportunity to help teammates achieve goals, to be enthusiastic every day, and to challenge each other as athletes. If you're only focused on the game or the win, that's a very narrow approach to the sport as a whole. And it won't work to make a winning team.

### And you want a winning team.

I want Furman to have one of the best lacrosse programs in the country. And for the athletes we produce to have the kind of leadership ability that is reflected in everything they do. At school and in life.

## 53

students enrolled at Furman in 2013 as a result of adding lacrosse to the athletic program

### #WhyFurmanMatters

Furman matters to me because of the passion and enthusiasm that permeates every part of the school. We're producing kids that are leaders in everything they do. There's a higher mission at Furman and I want to be a part of it.

—RICHIE MEADE